

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested. Applicant notes with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter within Claims 8, 12 and 13.

Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Ziegler (US 6,179,767). Claims 16–17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matsumoto (US 5,302,393) in view of Kovacs (US 5,833,603). Claims 1–7, 9, 11, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kovacs in view of Prutchi (US 5,730,125). Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kovacs in view of Prutchi and in further view of Wagner (US 5,001,054).

Claims 16–18 have been canceled without prejudice and Applicant reserves the right to pursue these claims in a continuation application. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features recited by allowed Claim 12. Claim 12 has therefore been canceled and Claim 13 has been amended to depend from Claim 1. Claims 19–29 have been added. Claim 19 recites the features recited by allowed Claim 8, as well as the features recited by original Claim 1 and intervening Claims 3, 4 and 7. Claims 20–29 correspond to original Claims 2, 5, 6 and 9–15, respectively. Claims 4 and 7 have been amended to address the Examiner's objection. Accordingly, Claims 1–11, 13–15 and 19–29 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks presented herein, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance and should now be passed to issue.

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

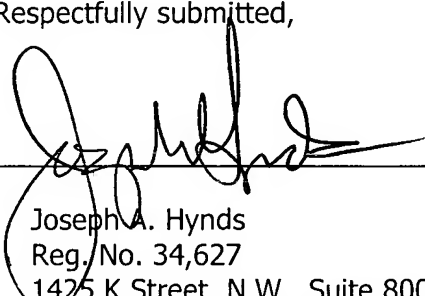
If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees and to credit any overpayments that may be required by this paper under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 02-2135.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


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